

ABSTRACT

The present invention provides an apparatus and method for moving playing cards from a first group of cards into plural hands of cards, wherein each of the hands contains a random arrangement of cards. The apparatus comprises a card receiver for receiving the first group of cards, a single stack of card-receiving compartments generally adjacent to the card receiver, the stack generally vertically movable, an elevator for moving the stack, a card-moving mechanism between the card receiver and the stack, and a microprocessor that controls the card-moving mechanism and the elevator so that an individual card is moved into an identified compartment. The number of compartments receiving cards and the number of cards moved to each compartment may be selected. An apparatus for feeding cards, comprising a surface for supporting a stack of cards, a feed roller with a frictional outer surface, a drive mechanism for causing rotation of the feed roller, a pair of speed-up rollers to advance the cards out of the feed roller, and a clutch mechanism for disengaging the feed roller from the drive mechanism as the card comes into contact with the speed up rollers.

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